

You should have a correct understanding of the Vedantic doctrine of the unreality of the world. The world is bad by itself; the things of the world are bad by themselves. Man's slavery to the false perception that cause which Vedantism to re-correcting his the world is unreal in the sense that the consciousness of its nature over

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—Swami Sivananda



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35.

1st October 1960

Sri R. B. Knight

London.

The same sun shines on all
man kind, giving life, light,
and energy. All. The same self
dwells in all, human, sub-
human and super human beings.

The same God pervades the
whole universe and guides
our destinies

Unity is Truth. Unity is life.
Unity is Peace. In Unity lies
strength.
May God bless you! Sivananda

RELIGIOUS CALENDAR

(Sivanandanagar)

NOVEMBER

- 1 Pradosha Poja;
All-Saints Day
- 2 All-Souls Day
- 2/3 Guru Nanak Jayanti;
Purnima
- 15 Ekadasi
- 16 Pradosha Puja
- 17 Jnaneshwar Jayanti
- 18 Amavasya
- 29 Ekadasi;
Bhagavadgita Jayanti
- 30 Pradosha Puja

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DIVINE LIFE

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Self-Realization

(From the 'Avadhuta Gita')

When the jar is broken, the space within it merges into 'differencelessness.' I do not see any difference between the supreme Self and the purified mind (so said Sage Dattatreya).

Know for certain that you are that which is everywhere and existent at all times, that which is the all, the Self, the eternal, the stable. The entire existence is a vacuum as well as plenum. "I am that supreme Self" (is the truth).

If the Consciousness-Light is omnipresent, eternal, full and differenceless, how can there be space for it to pervade anything inside and outside?

The whole universe shines as an indivisible and differenceless mass. O, look at this Illusory Power! The great delusion gives rise to the imaginations of duality and non-duality.

Know the imperishable Atman to be neither undivided nor divided, neither sorrowful nor joyful, neither full nor devoid of anything. *(The superimposition of the various positive qualities on the Atman are for its assumption by a finite instrument of perception, the mind, for the latter's evolution.)*

How can anyone talk of the Self which is beyond the reach of the mind and speech, which is devoid of the qualities of colour and sound?

You are *that*; there is no doubt about this. And what can I ever know (as other than me)? How can you know whether the Atman is unknowable or the Self-knowledge itself? How can you say whether the Atman is with form or without form?

O mind! I am neither the doer nor the enjoyer. I have no *karma*, either of the past or of the present. I am neither embodied nor disembodied. What is 'mineness' and 'not-mineness' to me, then? Know that I am the one Atman, expansive like the sky.

If the world is an imaginary nothing, if the body is an imaginary nothing, if all this is the one differenceless, homogeneous bliss, how can there be the distinction of good qualities and evil propensities?

Consider that all senses are the forms of the Absolute. Consider that all objects are the forms of the Absolute. Know the one, unblemished truth, which is neither bound nor liberated. O mind! I am the wisdom immortal, the homogeneous essence, all-pervading like the sky.

Path of Devotion

(From 'Narada Bhakti Sutras')

Devotion, verily, is the nature of the supreme love of God. On attaining this supreme love, man becomes perfect, immortal and fully satisfied.

On attaining this, he does not desire anything else, neither grieves over any loss, nor hates anything, neither indulges in sensual pleasures, nor feels any urge for the acquisition of material things.

Divine love is not of the nature of desire, because it is of the form of renunciation. On the contrary, the control of desires means resignation to God. It also means single-minded devotion to Him and indifference to all that is antagonistic. But thereby it is also understood the performance of those secular and religious activities that are worthy of God.

If the devotee, who has made some spiritual progress, is not careful, if he is not observing the rules as laid down in the scriptures, he may easily relapse into his past habits (that are not conducive to devotion).

The essential characteristics of devotion are the consecration of all observances and activities through complete self-surrender to God, and extreme anguish for not remembering Him.

Devotion is cultivated by listening to and singing the attributes and glories of God, and the company of great souls is a major factor. Evil company should be given up, because it is the cause of lust, anger, delusion and ruination.

Only he who avoids all contacts with such objects of the senses as are likely to inflame passions, who resorts to a great

spiritual soul, and who is free from "mine-ness" or the idea of possession, can overcome delusion (and progress in the path of devotion).

He who renounces the fruits of his actions, and (attachment to) all actions, goes beyond the pairs of the opposites.

The practice of devotion is easier than other methods for attaining salvation, because divine love does not depend on any other proof, as it is the proof by itself (felt in one's heart).

The path of devotion is of the nature of peace and supreme bliss. The devotee should feel no anxiety about his worldly concerns, since he has consecrated himself to the Lord.

Egotism, hypocrisy and other negative qualities should be given up. There should only be one-pointed devotion to God.

Among the devotees there is no distinction based on caste, learning, beauty, family or birth, wealth, observance or profession and the like, because all are God's own.

For the cultivation of devotion, the teachings of the scriptures that promote it should be constantly meditated upon, and the actions that are conducive to it should be performed.

Virtues like non-violence, truth, purity, compassion, and other excellences of character should be cultivated. God alone should be worshipped, wholeheartedly.

Only love of the absolute, eternal truth is the greatest; this love is, indeed, the greatest.

Yoga For Every Man

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

Yoga is not other-worldliness. Yoga is not magic. Physical feats are not Yoga. Asana and Pranayama alone are not Yoga, though they are two of the several parts of the Yoga system. Yoga is primarily a way of life, not something which is divorced from life.

Yoga is not a negation of the world, but a means to cultivate a correct perception into the nature of things, and one's relation to them. Yoga is not forsaking of action, but its efficient performance, in the right spirit. Yoga is not running away from home and human habitation, but a process of moulding one's attitude to home and society, with a new understanding.

Attachment to life is death. Freedom from attachment is life. It is attachment which dwarfs man's potentialities and binds his selfish ego to the objects into which it is projected, not for the sake of any intrinsic love for them, for their own sake, but because they are useful to him, and for the sake of his own ego.

CHANGE OF OUTLOOK

Yoga is primarily a process which turns this angle of vision, into a wider perspective. Life is sustained by a common divine consciousness, and it is the ego which veils that consciousness. This veil has to be torn asunder, and one must perceive the world as a manifestation of the Divine.

Service done in the light of this consciousness is worship of the Divine, and though man might be performing the duties that life has bequeathed on him, he would be doing them, not for the sake of his selfish gain, but in view of larger interests, and in a spirit of detachment, in the sense that his little self is not associated with

the performance of such duties. He would do them as an instrument of the Divine, guided by the light of his pure conscience.

This performance of what is called right action, in the right spirit, in the right manner, is one of the aspects of Yoga, in which is included a large range of preliminaries. One can have a pure conscience, only when the vehicle is pure, and this calls for a long process of self-purification. Self-purification is one of the basic processes of Yoga.

SPIRIT-OF YOGA

Detachment does not come from irresponsibility, but from right discernment. Spiritual values are superior to material considerations. Temporal welfare of the people is essential, but not by running down human values, and moral and spiritual principles. With every individual, this should be the primary endeavour.

The one spirit is immanent in all; therefore, one has no right to be selfish. Humanity is a family of common parentage; therefore, religious beliefs or social traditions of groups of people should not divide one another. Man should have broadmindedness, understanding, spirit of accommodation.

Life is meant for spiritual unfoldment. Human life is higher than animal life in the sense that man is not expected to behave like an animal. Therefore, the baser propensities in one's character have to be restrained and sublimated. This is another concurrent process of Yoga. Control of mind and the senses is the basic step, and then the inculcation of a sound moral sense and direction of one's actions as per one's moral convictions.

Refraining from that which would bring harm to others or run contrary to fundamental spiritual principles, man should place the interests of those with whom he is directly associated above his own. His first loyalty should be to God and His Law; his second consideration should be the interests of those whom he serves; and his last concern should be his personal, individual comfort and welfare—always and every time (because man is so deeply and persistently selfish). This is the spirit of Yoga.

UNVEILING THE INNER REALITY

We see, we hear, we smell, we taste, we touch, we move about, we speak, we work, we think. All these functions point to a power that provides the motive-force for all our thoughts and actions. We try to understand, discriminate and choose; we will and do. These are possible because there is a supreme Intelligence within us, which is veiled by our egotism and bound up by the tentacles of the worldly impressions we have gathered. The process of Yoga is unveiling that Intelligence within, by removing these outer coverage and tentacles.

Protracted endeavour is the price, but every little act of kindness and helpfulness, every attempt at self-abnegation, sincerity and regularity in practice, pave the way to success. Unselfishness is an expression of Yoga in practical life. Balance of mind is another expression. Non-attachment to self, and spirit of service (it is here self-association plays its worst role and which must be guarded against) are its effective expressions. Devotion to spiritual values, compassion for all, absence of religious bigotry, and practical life under the rule of the higher mind, are its noble fruits.

Performances of basic, cultural Yoga postures, and mild and simple regulation

of berath, help one to maintain good health, while exerting a sobering influence over the mind. But they should not be made a fad of, for they are only a means, not an end by themselves.

BASIC PRACTICES

Practice of concentration makes the mind strong and one-pointed, and meditation brings enlightenment. The process of the withdrawal of the mind from external objects, abstinence and self-discipline in other ways, strengthen the will. Nurturing of positive thoughts and contemplation on the nature of the Divine, help in the purification of the mind. Non-entertainment of negative thoughts, avoidance of undesirable company and of similar other influences, help in making the lower nature wither out by itself, while positive endeavours are simultaneously kept up.

Yoga is not an enemy of the senses. What it expects of you is to have mastery over them. Yoga does not want you to kill the mind, for as long as the body is there, killing the mind, *in toto*, is only an academic supposition. The objective of Yoga is control of the modifications of the mind, attainment of equilibrium, and reversing the position from being its servant to becoming its master.

Once these techniques are learnt well, you are able to function in the Gita spirit. You work, but are not bound by the work you do. You serve, but do not expect a reward thereof. You are dynamic, but not hurried or agitated. You are full of concern for the welfare of others, but are not infatuated with individuals. You are humble, but fearless. You are noble, but modest. You speak the truth always, but do not harm others thereby. You are full of compassion and love, but are not exclusively possessive. You are pure, but not

a narrow-minded, self-righteous puritan.

Thus it is possible for everyone to practise Yoga in daily life, as one who feels one's brotherhood with all, who ful-

fills one's duties and role in society, while not being high and dry, or living in an ivory tower and proclaiming one's distinct superiority over the rest of humanity.

Art and Religion

(Sri N. Srinivasarao)]

Religion is a code of ethics that guides man towards the realization of the all-pervasive, supreme Soul. Every religion teaches compassion, tolerance, magnanimity, fellowship, and chastens and purifies the heart, so that the individual might be fit to receive the divine grace. Art is an instrument—a vehicle used for spiritual contemplation and God-realization, according to the Indian view. Man's highest freedom, deepest poise and fullest experience are recovered and enlivened by the rhythms in his poetry, painting, sculpture, architecture, music and dance. Wherever man encounters rhythms and harmonies, he is, in fact, transported to a strange world of rest and silence, and feels the eternal Being.

In man's mind, artistic and religious apprehension comes to be differentiated in its function, in contemplation. Both art and religion thrive on contemplation, but aesthetic contemplation does not linger over truths which religion cherishes. Art clothes truths in garbs of concrete images. With the evolution of religion, art concerns itself with idols and paintings, and with myths and legends, delineating the lives of gods and goddesses. Art in an advanced stage of social development serves the spiritual needs of the people through identifying itself with imagery, the construction of temples or churches, and the development of religious epic and drama.

EXPLORATION OF MAN'S BEING

Art and religion develop together. Art

fashions the deity cult in which gods represent the aspirations of the human soul. Thus art, like religion, explores the entire meaning of life, the heights and depths of man's experience. It fashions appropriate symbols, and makes these emotionally potent, through songs of praise and thanksgiving to the deity who protects him from the forces of evil and misfortune. Even on the stage of mystical contemplation, art plays its role in rendering the Beyond and the Absolute through poetic imagery and allegory that deeply stir the religious emotions. In India, worship is rendered in music and dance, with elaborate gestures and movements, not to speak of the appeal of the beautiful images and paintings of the deity, all of which intensify the religious emotions of a person.

The emotional mysticism of religion is well reflected in the visual forms of the deity. The profound metaphysical concepts of the primary opposites, being and becoming, Purusha and Prakriti, unity and duality, that religion inculcates in India, are translated into the vernacular of Indian art, in the images of divine couples—Siva-Sakti, Lakshmi-Narayana, Radha-Krishna, in which are found both a religious and aesthetic quality. God's infinite grace and compassion, the power of divinity against sin and evil, the majesty of death that is overcome by the immortality of human spirit, similarly found expression in myriad images of Indian art. There was hardly any immortal and universal concept that could

not be translated into plastic form in Buddhist and Brahmanical art.

CHRISTIAN ART

Classical Greece did not develop the sense of the supersensible in connection with religion, but brought down the gods into the affairs of the world and shaped them in man's image. Greek art and religion could easily blend with each other in their mundane interests, both dealing with sensuous forms and rituals based on harmony and proportion.

Christianity passed through schisms and controversies in respect of artistic representation and worship of images and idols. "For giving aid to the worshipper, the universal is given artistic representation in forms and images." The *Vishnu-dharmottara* emphatically says, "Worship and contemplation of the supreme Being are possible for the human being, only when (the former) is endowed with form, because human beings are limited and finite." The Christian metaphysical doctrine of the Trinity, as represented by God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, found in the Christian world its artistic rendering in the holy images and paintings in churches.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, there was such a flood of idealism in France and other European countries that some of the world's most magnificent monuments of art were produced. Gothic sculpture resembles oriental sculpture, and the spirit of Gothic art, as a type of emotional mysticism, is closely akin to that of the Orient. While the Gothic cathedrals reproduced in their lofty, delicate spires, the icons of Christ and Madonna, strung together in graceful proportions, angels and apostles in the interior showed a combina-

tion of transcendental mystery and human sensitiveness, hardly met with again in Christian Europe.

SELF-EXPRESSION

Like Gothic art, Rajput art expressed the collective vision of the people and communicated the moods and sentiments of a whole epoch through epic poetry, songs and sonnets. In India, Rajput and Pahari art embodied a profound assimilation of transcendental and human values—an essential legacy of ancient Indian culture. As the western world was turning more and more to realism and naturalism, we had in India, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a pictorial art, that continued the traditions of fine, sensitive drawing and magic pattern of colours, as in Ajanta.

Man's aesthetic and religious impulse come out in self-expression. Myth and legend create symbols and images that bring poise or repose to the self. Art embellishes and makes these vivid, thus creating a sense of joy, rhythm and beauty in the inner life. Myths, symbols and imagery that religion provides for art are constantly refashioned with emotions and sentiments in artistic expression. A great work of art always combines a profound message from the depths of the artist's soul, with an intense emotional interest for all men, derived by it from the visual play of light and shade, forms, colours and planes.

"What is universal and eternal is enclosed by art in concrete, sensuous forms and phenomena, eliciting characteristic attitudes and emotional experiences and values that are deliberately sought in the image ritual and observance." It is the image and ritual that arouse in the worshipper a galaxy of emotions, attaching him to the religious pursuit. Like religious intuition, aesthetic intuition is derived from the

concept of the wholeness of the universe. The search for beauty, in spite of the rationalism of scientific epoch, has created

noble architecture, elaborate decorative art, delicate craftsmanship and exquisite poetry and music.

Need for a Measure of Detachment

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

It is generally thought that detachment might presuppose frustration and a lack of responsibility or carelessness. The spiritual meaning of the term is quite the contrary. True, when no responsibility is fixed on an individual and if no personal gain or loss is involved in some undertaking, one may show a lack of interest and initiative. That is the case with the worldly man, and nearly almost with everyone, since it is very difficult to find one who is hundred percent spiritual.

Detachment, however, has a great significance to a person who endeavours to raise himself from instinctive, physical level to a life of noble idealism and inner fulfilment. Without a measure of detachment, life becomes vitiated with an all-pervasive selfishness. It is gross selfishness that is at the root of individual discord, family disharmony, communal disruption and international tension.

The recent observation of a national leader is worth quoting: "All the millions of acts of violence that we commit daily in the course of our normal lives, constitute the basis on which the pyramidal violence of global war rests. All the little violences below, support the superstructure of world wars above. If there had been no violence at the bottom, there would have been none at the top."

ALL-PERVASIVE VIOLENCE

The life of man is permeated with violence, veiled or unveiled. There is perpetual violence in individual life. In the course of

everyday life, man gives expressions to so many forms of violence, by words and deeds, by thoughts and attitude, when he tries to force his self-interest on others, to dominate his ego over that of others, and run down those who might have hurt his vanity.

Tension among communities, religious fracas and political riots, one nation trying to dominate over a weaker one, one class of society discriminating against another, the factional leader exploiting the mob passion for self-aggrandizement, the so-called patriots resorting to violence to satisfy their vanity of regional loyalty, in the name of safeguarding the so-called distinctness of their culture, even though thereby they might strike at the root of national unity—all these are dire consequences of man's morbid, almost paranoiac attachment to self and all that are associated with it.

The whole structure of Society is a hot-bed of violence, one class trying to thrive at the expense of another, even in the name of religion and even by promoting class hatred through doctrinaire violence. There is almost no exception, where the ubiquitous violence in life is not felt. 'Myself and my interests are above everything else; my community and my province above all'—such is the dictum of almost everyone, whether directly or indirectly given expression to.

BANE OF SELF-ATTACHMENT

A measure of detachment in individual relationship, family life, and inter-commu-

nal and international relations, is the foremost need of the hour. It does not mean throwing into the winds the responsibilities of man to his family and society and country. It only means a saner outlook, a better performance of his duties.

It is because of man's extraordinary greed and self-attachment that he resorts to unfair means, in the name of desirable attachment to family or safeguarding personal interests. There is no harm if these are taken care of with a sense of responsibility. But, in actuality, man overstretches himself by resorting to untruth, cheating others and doing all-round violence in so many ways, in order that his self, which he projects into his immediate relations and the activities he does, might be perpetuated.

All relationships in life is vitiated because of this extraordinary self-love. It is here that a measure of detachment plays a vital role. If there is a little broadmindedness, if man tries to rise above his loyalty to self for the sake of those with whom he is directly associated, from his loyalty to regional ties for the sake of national unity and common welfare, from his chauvinistic loyalty for the sake of international fellowship—then the all-pervasive violence in life will be lessened to a very great extent.

Detachment is an antidote to jealousy, hatred and fear, suspicion, anxiety and restlessness. Man's fanatical attachment to material objects reduces him to a state of abject slavery, even though he might be a great votary of all kinds of freedom. He collapses like a punctured balloon when he suffers a material loss, and he bloats up to fantastic dimensions when his vanity has been overfulfilled. There is so much of irrationality in life.

IRRATIONAL MISERY

A man saw a beautifully-carved walking-stick floating down a river. He was at once elated by its appearance and wanted to possess it. He jumped into the river, swam up to the floating stick, and as he caught it, he was bursting with the joy of having achieved his desire. As he was swimming back, accidentally the stick slipped out of his hand, and, since by now he was nearly exhausted, he desperately headed for the river bank, even though he could not retrieve the stick.

This man felt very depressed and lamented the loss of the walking-stick. A few moments before it was not his own; he possessed it only for a minute or two; and when he lost it, he became unhappy. The life of man is filled with such irrational causes for unhappiness. You did not possess anything when you came into this world, and cannot take back anything when you depart from it. In between you make yourself miserable by so much of attachment and possessiveness. A measure of detachment is, therefore, a vital factor for peace and happiness in life.

Real love and compassion can thrive, only when man is unselfish or has a little detachment to his ego-centric self. Only then could he discharge his duties well and do effective service to the people. There would not be so much of violence in society, class hatred and disharmony in family, if individuals and communities would take cognizance of the interests of others a little more than one's own, if there is a little less of vanity about the so-called cultural or intellectual excellences of one's region as superior to another's, if one would take care to enlighten oneself by wider contacts and broader perspective. A measure of detachment must exercise a decisive role in curing man's perverted mentality.

Visit to Rishikesh

(By Natal Indian Teachers' Party)

Rishikesh, which lies along the banks of the holy Ganga in a delightfully pleasant setting, is truly full of peace and solace. One gets into the grips of religious atmosphere the very moment one enters the Ashram of Swami Sivananda. A tour of India is never complete without visiting this famed institution (Divine Life Society).

Swami Sivananda's teachings on divine life have spread throughout the world, so much so that the Branches (of the Divine Life Society) have been established all over India, and in Switzerland, Hong Kong, Germany and even as far as South Africa and North and South Americas. Daily there are visitors, both local and foreign, who come to seek peace of mind in this quiet, wooded valley.

At the head of the Ashram is Swami Sivananda, a thickset, pious-looking spiritual leader, whose very presence fills one with tremendous courage. At 74, Swamiji is very hard-working. Each morning, from 9.30 a.m. to 12.00 noon, he attends to correspondence, writing to folks far and near—plain business to some but written happiness to many who seek his divine assistance in times of extreme sorrow, pain or fear.

Swamiji's routine work in the office is continually interrupted by visitors who come daily to have his *darshan* and discuss a host of life's problems. Attending to correspondence and giving *darshan* are part of his general routine. In the evenings he is seen between 8.00 and 9.00, at the Satsanga, where he is the liveliest among those present.

Our three-day stay at Rishikesh amply indicated to us the amount of humanitarian work that was being put in by Swami-

ji, and his team of devoted workers. His motto, right from the time he was a young doctor in Malaya, has been "service." From a very humble beginning, this institution has grown into one which we can be proud of.

Today, there is an allopathic hospital, an Ayurvedic pharmaceutical works, as well as a homeopathic department, all of which provide free medical treatment to the rich and the poor alike. Two qualified doctors and inmates of the institution render their services (selflessly). There is an up-to-date eye hospital under the able supervision of Swami Hridayananda, a fully qualified eye surgeon. Delicate eye operations are performed, and X-ray facilities are also available.

The running of the Ashram is well organized, with services and lectures executed to a drawn time table. Students and devotees, representing many nationalities, attend the Yoga class at sunrise, followed by lectures on *Gita*, *Yoga-vasishtha* and *Panchadashi* (in the morning and afternoon).

The lectures by learned Sannyasins are well reasoned, and provide real food for thought. We were thoroughly impressed by the very high standard of knowledge imparted here. The Yoga museum offers much to a scholar who is interested in the spiritual side of life.

To cope with the new movement that is spreading in all parts of the globe, the headquarters of this institution spend an average of Rs. 30,000 every month. All printing is done in their own press. The Ashram provides lodging and boarding facilities for some three hundred inmates and visitors.

Public generosity has helped much to keep the Ashram going and, from time to time, extensions have been made and are still in progress. The institution caters for all children of God, irrespective of colour, caste or creed. If one wants to see a noble piece of work truly done, it is here. It attracts the great and small. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, General Cariappa and other General Officers, many Governors and Cabinet Ministers, and foreign dignitaries have all been to this holy Ashram.

After leaving this haven of peace one fact stands out—that one cannot but come to the conclusion that Swamiji's teachings, disseminated throughout the world, will do much in bringing the peoples of all creeds, races and religions together, who are besetted by greed, hatred and misunderstanding. The success of this institution, like that of any other public body, will depend on the generosity of all people who look forward to living in a world where peace, goodwill and harmony reign.

Three Types of Spiritual Aspirants

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

There are three types of spiritual aspirants—Sattvik, Rajasik and Tamasik. The Sattvik type is pure-hearted, has a clear, receptive mind, unquestioning faith, and a spontaneous disinclination to sensual life. He is an introvert, in a positive sense, and must have done a good part of Sadhana in his previous birth. He is the fittest person for Sannyasa and Self-realization.

The Rajasik type is an extrovert, has a rational bias, and always bubbles with enthusiasm to assert himself. He is persevering, does not accept setbacks lackadaisically and gives a good account of himself in public service. He loves glory, pomp and comfort. He is not free from vanity and self-righteousness. He has a missionary zeal.

The Tamasik type is naturally lazy and heedless in disposition. He does not care to learn or improve himself, even though he might be a Sadhu by force of circumstances. He is extremely pessimistic, neurotic and is a narcissist. He likes sensual pleasures but is not ready to exert himself to gain them. He does not care whether he is destined to go to heaven or hell, but is always

dissatisfied. He hates himself and hates others, and lives a life of mental indolence and also physical inertia as far as he can help.

There are various sets of analogies for these three types with regard to their progress in a spiritual surrounding and with the help of a Guru.

The sponge absorbs water quickly and fully, a piece of wood slowly and in less quantity, and a stone never absorbs any water, however long submerged therein, and would remain wet externally as long as in contact with the water, but only to quickly dry up the moment it is removed from the water. These are comparable to the Sattvik, Rajasik and the Tamasik types, respectively.

A vessel in which milk is kept can be cleaned very easily. So is the Sattvik mind. A vessel in which butter is kept can be cleaned with some effort. So is the Rajasik mind. You will have to use soap or soda in the form of intense Sadhana. A vessel in which coal-tar is kept would take a very long time and a good deal of effort to clean. Such is the Tamasik mind. The aspirant,

who is comparatively less Tamasik than the one who was compared to a stone, can improve himself in this very life, with rigorous discipline and persistent effort over a period of several years.

The pine tree blazes up quickly. Charcoal takes some time to become a burning fire. Wet fuel takes a very long time and much effort before it can dry up, catch fire and begin to blaze. So are the Sattvik, Rajasik and Tamasik aspirants, respectively, when they come in contact with a Guru of the highest realization, and seek to attain enlightenment from him.

You can see the burning filament in a bulb made of colourless glass, in its exact brilliance. In a coloured bulb the light is less bright and is perceived according to the colour of the glass. In a bulb that has

been painted with tar, the light is very dim, and the brilliant whiteness of the filament is made to appear like a dull, blackish red. The perception of spiritual truth in the Sattvik, Rajasik and Tamasik minds is similarly analogous, respectively.

There is also another comparison—with clouds. Through the autumnal clouds, sparse and like cotton flakes, the sun glows brightly (Sattvik mind). Through monsoon clouds, heavy and gray, the sun is visible dimly (Rajasik mind). Through thunder clouds, dense and black, the sun's rays do not penetrate (Tamasik mind).

The process of evolution and of all Sadhanas is indicative of the transformation of the Tamasik mind into Rajasik, and the Rajasik into Sattvik.

Questions and Answers

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

What are the basic instincts in man?

The instincts of self-preservation, and self-propagation through procreation. Spiritually speaking, he has three deep-rooted urges: he wishes to live and continue to be; he wishes to know; and he wishes to be happy for ever.

How is sex connected with Bhakti?

Only in sublimation. Where one predominates, the other does not.

Is Ayurveda better than allopathy? Are you in favour of Ayurveda?

I am in favour of all systems of healing. I want that whatever be the system which suits a particular person, it must be brought to his aid and that he must get well. I am only interested in bringing quick and lasting relief to the sick.

Why do some of the religious people develop hypertension?

Worry is one of the main causes of

hypertension, and a truly religious man, who lives in God, should not worry himself. But it does take a long time and a good amount of practice to acquire balance of mind under all conditions. A strenuous life and extra-rich diet also contribute to hypertension.

Should the ladies chant 'Om' and the Vedic 'mantras'?

Why not?

Should they wear 'tulsi' and 'rudraksha' malas (rosaries), as the religious-minded widows do?

All ladies can wear any kind of rosaries if they are spiritually inclined.

Why is an average Indian more fatalistic than an average Westerner? Is Hindu philosophy to blame?

It is a misunderstanding of the Hindu philosophy that is one of the various

causes for fatalism. The real basis of Hindu philosophy is full of optimism. Have you never read *Bhagavadgita* and *Yoga-Vasishtha*?

Do you prefer a hard-hearted Sannyasin to a soft-hearted worldly man?

A Sannyasin who is hard-hearted is not a Sannyasin at all. He should be full of mercy, compassion and eagerness to serve the needy, for to him the world is God.

Mridula's Revelation of Her Last Birth

(Rani Chandravati Singh, B.A.)

Mummy! Mummy! exclaimed a child of two years and three months, and jumped out of her mother's lap and ran towards the object of her attraction. That very moment an elderly lady was getting out of a car on the road in front of Mridula's house. The child ran towards the car and exclaimed incoherently, "Ah, that car is mine, and she is my mummy." The elderly lady, however, ignored the child and walked passed her. Mridula's mother rushed out, fearing that her child might be lost on the road.

But Mridula would not move from near the car, as she was looking hither and thither, as if in search of someone, her face flushed with excitement and joy. Her mother, however, would share none of that, and as she felt embarrassed, she took away the child forcibly back into her house. That night Mridula was not her own self. She went on speaking all sorts of things to her mother, like an adult recollecting the bygone days.

Mridula would say: "I have another home, mummy! We have six elephants and a car, too, and there are my younger sister and daddy and so many friends. Will you take me to my old mummy, please? I promised her to come. Oh, how I want to go home!" And she would keep on gushing with a babble of such irrelevancies, i.e., as others would think of them, but not the child. Her mother was thoroughly baffled,

and wondered if the child was mentally all right.

A STRANGE MEETING

Days and weeks and months rolled past. It was now more than six months, but Mridula would keep on harping on her old theme, her big house and car and friends. The poor mother, with all her efforts, was unable to pacify the child. But the merciful Lord came to their help thus:

A *yajna* (a ritualistic rite according to Hindu tradition, when sacrificial oblations of clarified butter, etc., are poured into fire with the chanting of sacred syllables) was being performed on a large scale, in which many members of the community participated. Mridula's mother, too, had gone there, taking the child with her. As the ceremony came to a close, Mridula, who had been watching, ran towards two small children, of her own age, who were sitting at a distance. She took off the garlands she had been wearing, and put them around the necks of those children.

The mother of the children, who stood nearby, was surprised, but appreciated this gesture of Mridula and said: "You seem to be a very sweet child. Do you know them?" Mridula at once replied: "Oh I know *you* very well, though not these children," and then with bubbling emotion she asked: "Don't you recognize me? I am Munnu, your elder sister. Where are our

daddy and mummy? How are our elephants?" And Mridula kept on speaking excitedly, in this manner, many things which only an intimate member of the same family could have known.

The mother of those two children was thunderstruck, and she clasped Mridula to her bosom, and asked her many questions connected with the family. She took Mridula to her mother, and told her all that had happened and asked her permission if she would allow Mridula visit her home. The mother agreed and they all drove to the young lady's house in her car.

BACK TO THE OLD HOUSE

The car stopped in front of a house, and Mridula rushed out, shouting: "Oh, this is my house! Oh, here is my daddy! here is my daddy!" as she saw an elderly gentleman standing at the gate. They were all baffled to see her rushing inside, and going from room to room, and telling who were in each of them some years ago. And then she found her room and said that here she lived, and located some books and said that these were which she had read for her M.A. course. She sought out her almirah and said there used to be her clothes, and also the cot where she fell ill, and lamented that she could not appear for her M.A. examination.

Mridula asked the elderly lady of the house, with childish eagerness: "Do you know, mummy, how I felt at the time I left my body?" She pointed to her hands and feet and said: "All the nerves were taut and I felt terrible pain, and then I flew up, knowing not where, just like a bird. Then I wandered here and there, and saw many luminous and joyful things. Everyone was happy there. Then I remembered you and felt very sorry, for I was

not with you, and then I did not remember anything." The elderly couple, who were deeply attached to their first daughter and had lost her six or seven years back, could say nothing, and as the old memories came back to them, they burst into tears.

Mridula's words penetrated deep into their hearts, and they felt that the whole thing was like a dream, difficult to grasp, and yet very true, rather a revelation of profound truth, which this little unknown child unveiled before them. And Mridula would not stop and insisted: "I am the same Medha, whom you gave the pet name 'Munnu.' How are my friend? How is Shuklaji of D.A.V. College? Everything here in this house is more or less the same as I had left. But why have you made changes in my room? This fan does not belong here; it was in the drawing room. Please speak to me, mummy! You made me promise, when I was leaving, that I would come back, and here I am!" The poor lady could no longer restrain herself, and she clasped the child to her heart as tears were streaming down her cheeks.

RENEWAL OF PAST TIES

Medha, who had died of tongue cancer at Dehra Dun, in her early twenties, in 1945, was doing her M.A. course, but could not appear for the final examination. Her deep attachment to her family had most unusually left a residue of her past memory when she was born again, to work out her *karma*. She had belonged to a wealthy Vaishya (commercial) family of Dehra Dun, and she took birth in a Brahmin family (priestly caste—though nowadays few follow one's avocation according to one's own caste), in Nasik, nearly a thousand miles south, on July 31, 1949. But her Brahmin

father died soon after her birth, and the mother shifted to Dehra Dun and took up a teaching career. The child found the memory of her past birth in a flash, when she was two years and three months old, as stated before.

Since Mridula had lived for more than twenty years in the previous birth, her attachment to her former family was naturally more deep-rooted than to her present mother, and, therefore, she was more eager to stay with the former family than in her own house. One can imagine the feelings of this poor lady, who had nursed her child with so much care and who loved her as her own self, having lost her husband, though Mridula's former parents, being glad to have her with them, gave her all the care she needed.

The *Gita* says (in the second chapter, verse 22): "Just as a man casts off worn out clothes and puts on new ones, so also the embodied soul casts off worn out bodies and enters new ones." This was actually proved in the case of Mridula, who was one of the very rare exceptions to have retained the memory of her past birth. Perhaps it is fortunate of man in not remembering the memories of past lives, since it spares him a good deal of suffering, caused by attachment to the moorings that could hardly be regained, without discomfiture."

IMMORTALITY OF SOUL

Mridula had been to the *ashram* of Sri Swami Sivanandaji at Rishikesh quite a few times. When she had come there soon

after the flash-back of her past memory, with her present mother, she was about five years old, and had a vivid recollection of her past life. She had been to Swamiji's *ashram* with her both mothers, subsequently. Now she is ten years old, and her old memories have faded out a good deal, being smothered by the impressions of her present childhood. She is an intelligent, healthy and a perfectly normal child.

Swamiji, who had listened to the child's experiences, told us that there was nothing new about them. There had been similar instances in the past, but very rare and far between, as for example, the case of Shanti Devi, who, as a small child, found her former relations, more than twenty years ago. These prove the immortality of the soul, which is individualized in different forms through different *samskaras* or the sumtotal of impressions caused through actions, good or bad, mental or physical. Swamiji pointed out the need of freeing ourselves from the bond of *karma* and to return back to our original, divine source. He shows us the way, by following which we can attain Godhead. He asks us to perform good actions in a spirit of detachment and dedication, and enquire "Who am I?" Swamiji's cryptic injunctions are: "Be good, do good," "detach and attach" ("detach the mind from worldly objects and attach it to the Lord"). Let us all humbly pray to him to bestow upon us his grace and give us the strength to march forward and Godward.

The way to build a better nation is to build better individuals. A successful nation is usually composed of citizens, the majority of whom are efficient, of good character, and possess a reasonably high sense of duty.

An individual who aspires to be trusted should have character. The foundation of business, as we know, is credit. Credit depends upon confidence, and confidence upon character.

—Sir M. Visvesvaraya

The True Sannyasin

(Sri J.P. Vaswani)

[The following write-up was sent by the Editor of 'East and West Series' to Sri Swami Sivananda, on the occasion of the latter's 74th birthday, celebrated on the 8th of the last month.]

Revered Swamiji,

September 8 returns with its wealth of blessings. And with an humble, joy-filled heart I join the endless procession of devotees and disciples, eager to offer you their loving *pranams*, this sacred day.

The great mystic, Plotinus, spoke of the "flight of the alone to the Alone." Your dedicated life has, through many years, borne witness to a different ideal. And though you have blessed many with *sannyasa*, you have never advocated withdrawal from the world of outward activities. You are not a teacher of that self-centered asceticism which strives for the salvation of an individual soul. The true *sannyasi*, you have rightly urged, is a helper and server of the children of God. Like you, he lives in the world, yet lives an eternal life—lives in the Infinite. Such men are India's urgent need, today; they will lead her to that New Freedom which has its home in God!

You, Swamiji, are of the race of heroes. Fearless, courageous and bold, you have shown what it is to walk the heroic way. It is the glorious way, the upward way, the way that leadeth to the realm of Wonder, the realm of the Inexplicable. It is the way of tender intimacy with Him who is the Lover, the Friend, the Spouse of the soul. So it is that life to you means intimate fellowship with God and God-in-man. So it is that every man is your brother and the whole earth is your country.

No one is an alien to you and you are a stranger to none! Dwelling in the midst of men, you are as one apart. And though you live on earth, your true life is in the Kingdom of God.

May you live for many more years and spread the gospel of love in this sad world of hate and strife! We need you. India needs you. The broken world needs you. Many a weary, heavyladen heart needs you. For out of you flow, as in endless streams, health and harmony, peace and joy, to so many who come in contact with you.

You have founded institutions for the welfare of the common man. You have written books which infuse in many hearts abiding faith in the Power that sustains a dynamic, spiritual life. The world knows you as a leader of men, a builder of institutions, an organizer, a tremendous worker. I love to think of you, Swamiji, as an artist. Your strong hands wield a mighty brush. The world does not—cannot—see the picture you are painting. It is within you: it is of your soul. And the skies at dawn and the midnight moon are but dim reflections of that picture. And long after the institutions have done their work and passed away, the beauty and the inspiration of your picture will continue to travel from planet to planet, from star to star!

I bow down to you and seek your blessings.

Sd. J.P. Vaswani

Efficiency implies the possession, in a high degree, of the qualities of diligence, ambition, punctuality, discipline, precision, and a desire to do one's work of as high a quality as possible.

—Sir M. Visvesvaraya

Main Characteristics of Swami Sivananda

(Sri A.B.N. Sinha)

Sacred is pilgrimage to Jagannath, Dwaraka, Rameshwar and Kedarnath, as also to Ayodhya, Mathura, Kashi and Sringeri. Sacred, too, is a dip in the Ganga, Godavari, Sarayu, Yamuna and Gandak. But more sacred is meeting with a saint, whose mere sight, according to *Bhagavata*, burns out one's sins. Rush, then, to a place of pilgrimage, if you please, and hurry to the confluence at Prayag, if you can, but more necessary it is to seek a living saint, should you wish to turn over a new leaf in your life. That is the way to understand the *Upanishads*; in that way is the gate to divine life thrown open to you; thus can you easily attain peace and contentment. Decidedly, one of the greatest living saints is Swami Sivananda. (*This article was written on the occasion of the 74th birthday of Swamiji and was published in a Patna Daily.*)

Swami Sivananda is a religious leader, though so unlike many other saints. A Chinese patriot has his value in his own land. A French nationalist is no guide to others living elsewhere. A Muslim divine leads you along his own path. A Christian Father claims to possess the key to Heaven. A Shaiva, a Shakta and a Buddhist have different types of aspirations. All might be converging to the same centre, but the names and patterns are different.

Swami Sivananda is the founder of a new "religion" (*though he never claims to have done so*), which has eschewed all "isms" and retained the Upanishadic philosophy about the Creator and the creation. The preaching of the *Bhagavadgita* is what he inculcates at Sivanandanagar. Swamiji's "religion" lays stress on service—service to all, rendered with unalloyed love, and in a spirit of detachment. There should

be no distinction of creed or country. Service knows no limitation, and charity cannot be circumscribed. But while doing service, one should not forget the Lord, but meditate on Him as often as one can.

Everyone can realize God. There are no heathen, no *kafir*, no "untouchable" in the eyes of God. Swamiji accords no exclusive sanctity to any place of worship, and prescribes no special rite for exclusive performance. Go forward in your own way, but forget not selfless service, with love and remembrance of the Lord. That is the "religion" of Swamiji; that is his philosophy; and that is the central point of the hundreds of volumes which have emanated from his pen.

From a lucrative career as a doctor in Malaya, on his return to India, in 1923, Swamiji gave away all he possessed and, after some wandering, came to Rishikesh, sparsely clad and with an empty pocket. There he preferred to partake of the simple alms given by the Kali Kambliwala Kshetra, and lived in a hut. The bare ground served as his bed and his arm was his pillow. Service to the sick constituted his cherished mission.

The scene has vastly changed now. He owns today a sizable colony of many buildings, where Sadhus and selfless workers, and visiting aspirants reside. Food is served to nearly 400 persons every day, morning and evening. Medicines are given freely, and so are books on Yoga and religion. He is giving away thousands of rupees worth of these, and yet money does pour in to meet his ever-expanding demands. New houses are springing up. Temples are being properly maintained. Guests from all over the world receive hospitality.

From where does money come to meet

this huge expenditure? There are no endowment worth the name, and no permanent income. Yet the expenses are being met, day after day. That is, in itself, a miracle, which those on the look out for miracles would do well to observe. Saints alone can perform such miracles, and Swami Sivananda is certainly a saint, far above those one generally comes across.

Swamiji is known all over the world. In many a home he is worshipped as the Lord incarnate, while all agree that he is the prophet of the new age. Born a Shaiva (worshipper of Shiva), he gives *mantras* to Shaktas (worshippers of the Divine Mother) and Vaishnavas (worshippers of Vishnu and His incarnations), and he teaches the *Mahamrityunjaya mantra* to all. His language of prayer and *kirtan* is a combi-

nation of Sanskrit and English, with a free mixing of vernacular dialects.

To the Lord he prays, with the names of Jesus, Mohammed, Buddha and Jehovah, all mixed up, these being the messengers of the same Divinity. To him "Om" is as dear as "Sita Ram," or "Radha Krishna," or God, or Allah, or Ormuzd. Prayer is the means of God-communion, and whether it is in Arabic, or German, or Chinese, or Russian, does not matter to him. The structure of the building does not matter; service need not be similar; divine love may have various aspects and be differently directed. To Swamiji what matters is that you should reach the goal, which is ultimately one. May he continue to serve humanity and guide people along the right path.

Communion of Two Great Souls

(A Letter from Sadhu Vaswani to Swami Sivananda)

Beloved Brother,

I think of you oftener than you many know. I think of you when He is alone here with me—the Beloved of my heart. And as I think of you, I think of the Angels around you. They are around you to serve and bless. And are they not more in number than the sands on the seashore, and the water-drops in your flowing stream, and the grass that grows in the garden by my room, and the stars that shine in the skies above me?

Methinks, I see your picture before me, and I bow to it with love in my heart; and the prayer of a saint rises within me:

*Beloved! come thou
In the temple of my heart!
And let me touch thy feet
In pure, gentle love!
When the heart doth mingle*

*In love with the Love Divine,
Then are withdrawn
The seven veils of Light;
Then doth one heart melt into another;
Then are both in Beauty bathed,
And in them doth shine
The One Face Divine—
Pure and fair beyond compare!*

With love and humility in my heart I bow to Him, and say: Glory to Thee, O Lord of Life and Light and Love! Glory to Thee who dost veil Thyself with many veils! When the veils are removed, the whole world is Thy Sanctuary, and the darkest of things is the dwelling-place of Thee, Beloved! And every tongue and every tree and every stone and every star and every gale of wind speaks of Thee and sings Thy Name Divine! Blessed be Thy Name for ever!

Sd. T.L. Vaswani

Vivekachudamani

(Sri Swami Narayananda)

उपाधिरायाति त एव गच्छति
स एव कर्माणि करोति भुङ्क्ते ।
स एव जीर्यन्निवसते सदाहं
कुलाद्रिवग्निश्चल एव सस्थितः ॥५०॥

501. It is the superimposed attribute that comes and goes. That alone performs actions and enjoys. That alone decays and dies. This 'I' ever stays fixed as the Kula mountain.

Commentary: If the Atman is actionless who is it that acts? This verse gives the answer. It is the limiting adjuncts of the body and the sense-organs that act and acquire the *Karmas* which individualize the consciousness through the creation of the Chitta, Buddhi and Ahamkara. The Self is stable and permanent as the Kula mountain (the simile is indicative of the immovability of the Soul), though the superimpositions, such as the body and mind, are ever-changing.

न मे प्रवृत्तिर्न च मे निवृत्तिः
सदैकरूपस्य निरंशकस्य ।
एकात्मको यो निविडा निरन्तरो
व्योमेव पूर्णः स कथं नु चेष्टते ॥५१॥

502. I am not connected with any action or cessation thereof. I am the partless whole, which is always one without a second, or change. I am always one and secondless, without a break, ever-concentrated and and full, and all-pervading like ether. Then, how can there be action in me?

Commentary: The body and mind alone are connected with action, reaction and inaction. The dualities seen in this world do not exist in the Atman. The aspirant, thus, tries to get over body-consciousness and the limitations of the mind by identifying himself with the Atman, which

is without a second, which is not agitated by any movement in the sense-world, and not elated or depressed by any gain or loss in relation to body and mind.

पुण्यानि पापानि निरिन्द्रियस्य
निश्चेतसो निर्विकृतेर्निराकृतेः ।
कुतो ममाखण्डसुखानुभूते-
ब्रूते ह्यनन्वागतमित्यपि श्रुतिः ॥५२॥

503. For one who is without sense-organs, how can there be merit or demerit? For one who is without (the limiting) mind, who is but formless and without movements, how can there be change? The Atman is without parts, it is ever full of bliss absolute. The Sruti says, "It is not affected."

Commentary: "It is not touched by virtue or sin" is the authority of the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*. The goal of the Yogi is to experience the state of being independent of mental modifications and the functioning of the sense-organs, which is possible only in Samadhi, when there is only a superconscious experience of unalloyed bliss, and by attaining which only one could rise above the pairs of the opposites.

छायया स्पृष्टमुष्णं वा शीतं वा सुष्ठु दुष्टं वा ।
न स्पृशत्येव यत्किञ्चित्पुरुषं तद्विलक्षणम् ॥५३॥

504. If heat or cold, good or evil, affect the shadow of a man, how can it in the least touch him who is distinct from his shadow?

Commentary: The shadow simile is again indicative of the fact that all mundane experiences belong only to the body and mind, which the aspirant should consider to be a mere shadow of his soul, and being identified only with the substance,

he should remain unmoved by the pairs of the opposites reacting on the shadow. The aspirant is thus not elated or grieved by the changing conditions of the sense-world,

since he is not the shadow but the substance, the latter being always rooted in its inherent consciousness of existence-knowledge-bliss absolute.

A Gallant Soldier Passes Away

(Major-General A.N. Sharma, retd.)

[The following obituary by a comrade-in-arm was written on the sudden demise of Major-General Yadunath Singh in the first week of August, at Srinagar, Kashmir, after an heart-attack. Gen. Yadu was a deeply-devoted disciple of Sri Swami Sivanandaji, a gallant soldier and a perfect gentleman. He was commissioned from the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, England, and first came to know about Swamiji from a British officer while serving in Lord Mountbatten's South-East Asia Command at Kandy, Ceylon, during the second world war.]

Soon after the war, Gen. Yadu, then a Lt.-Colonel, availed the first opportunity to pay a visit to Sivanandashram, and since then he had been a frequent visitor here, and was regarded as an ashramite. He was the recipient of India's second highest award for gallantry in action, MAHA VIRA CHAKRA, and had served the country as commander of the 26 Infantry Division, head of the Indian Military Mission in Nepal, and as Military Secretary to the President, before he became chairman of the Public Service Commission in Kashmir. He never missed a day in his prayers, and always had a copy of the BHAGAVADGITA on his person while leading a battle. May his soul rest in peace! —DLJ

It is with a heavy heart that we heard the sad and untimely passing away of this great leader of the Army at such a young age.

I met him first in the early 'thirties

as a brilliant young Lieutenant. Full of keen sense of duty and rare powers of drive, he possessed a personality which commanded immediate and willing co-operation, with love and devotion, of all those that had the honour of working under him.

It is really a very rare achievement in being excellent in many things. Although a strict and efficient General Officer, he possessed a heart full of consideration for everyone who came under his care. Active at all times, he never missed his daily worship. He was aptly known as the Sadhu General in the Army, because mentally he practised detachment and renunciation, although he carried out all his duties with great zeal and ability at all times.

One of the humble devotees of our Beloved Sivanandaji, he lived the life of a real Sadhu, though externally he was a great and responsible officer.

Selfless at all times, he spent a few weeks before his demise in carrying out the difficult but self-imposed task of trying to liquidate the dacoit problem in Central India.

A fearless hero of many a battle, he risked his life on several occasions to encourage troops to conquer difficult objectives. He was decorated with our distinguished award, *Maha Vira Chakra*.

It was on many occasions that he talked of spending the rest of his life in the noble mission of social reformation on

Gandhian lines, in the rural India, as a deputy to the well-known saint of the Bhudan Movement, Vinoba Bhawe.

In Yadu we lost a self-realized soul,

whose presence would have helped greatly in leading our country towards the resuscitation of her spiritual values. May his soul rest in peace!

Essence of Brahmasutras

(Sri K.S. Ramaswami Sastri)

[Continued from the August issue]

Adhikarana eight, Sutra 21 and 22: The Being is the Supreme Lord, and not the sun god. He is described as sinless (Sutra 21). The *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* says that He is the sun god in the solar orb, but also the transcendent Reality.

Adhi. nine, Su. 23: Akasa (the sky) means Brahman, because the text says that Akasa is the cause of the universe.

Adhi. 10, Su. 24: Prana (soul), in the text, is Brahman for the same reason.

Adhi. 11, Su. 25 to 28: Jyoti, in the *Chandogya* text, *Atha yadatah paro divo jyotir-dipyate*, is God, because a fourth of Jyoti (Light) is said to have become the whole universe. The word "Gayatri," in an earlier portion of the passage, is Brahman, as a mere metre cannot produce the universe.

Adhi. 12, Su. 29 to 32: In the *Kaushitaki* text, *Pranosmi prajnatma*, Indra refers to himself as Prana, when he identifies himself with Siva. Prana (soul) is the Supreme Lord, since the Being is said to be blissful and eternal, and that which sustains all things. The meditation can be on Siva as Himself, or as Prana or soul. The first meditation gives immediate results, while the others give delayed results.

Chapter one, section two, Adhi. one, Su. one and two: In the first section of this chapter, the aphorist dealt with the texts which are diversely indicative of Brahman (*Spashtalingani*). In this sec-

tion (*Pada*) and in section three, he deals with the indecisive texts (*Anatispashtalingani*). In the texts, *Manomayah pranashariro bharupah satyasankalpah*, the reference is to Brahman, since, in the beginning of the passages, the Being is said to be the source of the universe (*Sarvam khalvidam Brahma*). As the whole world is God's body, we should have no mundane love or hate, but should worship Him and the world in a mood of *Santi* (peace).

The whole world, from Sakti (Cosmic Power) to Prithivi (gross earth) is originated from Siva (*Shaktyadi cha prithivyantam Siva-tattwasamudbhavam*). Sakti is His form and quality, and without it He cannot be omniscient, etc. (Su. one). The word "Satyasankalpa" also shows that the reference is to God (Su. two).

Adhi. two, Su. three to eight: The Being referred to is Siva, and not Narayana who, though the creator of Brahma—the latter being the Jivasamashti or totality of souls—is only a devotee of Siva, the Supreme Lord, who transcends the universe. The *Sruti* says: *Patim vishvasyatmeshwaram Shivamachyutam*. Siva, not Narayana, is the Lord of the universe (Su. three). The word "Padmakoshapraticaksham," shows that Siva is seated in the heart of Narayana (Su. four). The words "Narayana param Brahma" mean "Narayanatparam Brahma" (Su. five). The *Gita* says: *Darshayamasaparthaya paramamrupa maishwaram*. So Iswara is the deity

of Narayana (Su. six). The Daharakasa is referred to as His locus, since it is the place of meditation (Su. seven). God's body is assumed by Him out of His grace, and so the law of Karma cannot apply to it (Su. eight).

Adhi. three, Su. nine and 10: The destroyers of the whole world can apply

only to God. He alone remains; after the dissolution of the gross universe, it remains in a subtle state. So God is called Kevala (*Yada tamastanna diva na ratrina sama chasat shiva eva kevala*). He afterwards recreates the universe at His will. He is its material cause and efficient cause, too. *(To be continued)*

Ashram News and Notes

YOGA-VEDANTA CONFERENCE

The 43rd All-India Yoga-Vedanta Conference and the Sadhana Week-end, also 43rd in the series, were held at Sivanandanagar from September 26 to 29. A number of spiritual aspirants from various places, including a few from abroad, participated in the four-day programme, the main features of which were common prayers, group meditation and Yoga exercises in the early morning, followed by the forenoon and the afternoon sessions of discourses, and wound up with routine night *satsanga* held in the immediate presence of Sri Swami Sivanandaji and concluded with his *kirtan*, prayer and blessings.

The morning prayers included chorus recitation of the hymns to Guru, peace chants from the *Vedas* and other verses from the scriptures, besides the "Universal Prayer" of Swamiji, while in group meditation, the aspirants followed their own modes of practice and the choice of formulae or objects to meditate upon. The class on Yoga exercises dealt with the basic *asanas* and *pranayamas* and *suryanamaskaras*. The night *satsanga* included devotional music, chorus *kirtan*, and some special music and dance performances.

MUSIC AND DANCE RECITALS

Mrs. Bhanumati Rao and Thangamani Raja, of New Delhi, gave a couple of dance

recitals in the *Kathakali* style, their themes being one from the *Mahabharata* pertaining to Draupadi's complaint to Sri Krishna on the dishevelled condition of her hairs, and the other depicting an interlude between Jayanta, son of Indra, and Lalita, a demoness. Mrs. Bhanumati Rao also gave a recital of the Nataraja dance in the *Bharatanatya* style.

Among those who gave music performances were: Sri V. Rajamani Bhagavata, Sri Syamala Sundaram and Sri Nagarajan, of New Delhi (vocal and violin recitals); Swami Vidyananda, chief instructor in music at Sivanandanagar (*veena* recitals); and Mrs. Rajalakshmi Rao, from Bareilly (vocal).

DISCOURSES

There were seven sessions of discourses on the various aspects of Yoga, the Vedanta philosophy, and the basic principles of religion and spiritual life. The morning session of September 26 was devoted to the enunciation of the "Yoga of synthesis" as taught in the *Bhagavadgita*, the main speakers being Swami Jyotirmayananda and Omtatsatananda. The afternoon session dealt with the ideal of spiritual life and the general principles of Yogic discipline. Among those who spoke were Swami Santananda, Omtatsatananda and Yogi Anand.

Bhakti Yoga was the subject for the morning session on the 27th, when Swami Jyotirmayananda, Swami Shantananda, of Delhi, and Sri Rajani Mohan Chakravarti, of Calcutta, spoke, whilst in the afternoon, the 22nd session of the Sadhus Federation was held, when the aspect of Karma Yoga in the lives of the renunciates and the householders alike was the topic of discourses. The main speakers were Swami Jyotirmayananda and Kalyanananda. Swami Vedantananda also read a paper on the practical utility of Vedanta.

Raja Yoga was the general subject, with particular emphasis on the control of mind, on the morning of September 28, the principal speaker being Swami Krishnananda. He was followed by Swami Jyotirmayananda, Lalitananda and Yogiraj Nityananda. The afternoon session was devoted to the holding of the 24th session of the All-World Religions Federation, the speakers being Sri Shivaprem, Swami Omtatsatananda and Yogi Anand. Swami Jyotirmayananda, at the end of each lecture, summarized the themes in Hindi.

On the morning of the 29th, Saraswati Puja was done, followed by Kanya Puja. A large-size statue of the Goddess was earlier made by Swami Umashankarananda, who was assisted by a fellow-German visitor, and installed in the 'Satsang Bhavan' for worship on the last three days of the Navaratri. The concluding session of the Yoga-Vedanta Conference dealt with the Vedanta philosophy, the main speakers being Swami Krishnananda, Jyotirmayananda and Omtatsatananda.

Among the devotees and aspirants participating in the programme were 23 members of the Arrah Branch of the Divine Life Society. Many of the participants took part in *mantra*-writing on the first three days, held just before the commence-

ment of the afternoon session of lectures. On the 28th, a competition in *mantra*-writing was held and prizes awarded to those who topped the children's and adults' groups. On the 29th, Swami Jyotirmayananda explained the various charts and other objects on view at the Ashram's Yoga museum.

The entire programme of discourses at the Yoga-Vedanta Conference was efficiently conducted under the supervision of Swami Jyotirmayananda, in which he was the most active participant.

NAVARATRI

The Ashram celebrated the nine-day worship of the Goddess or the symbolic Cosmic Power of the Reality, in the three aspects of Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati, from September 21 to 29. Sri Swami Sivanandaji attended the worship specially offered during the night *satsanga*, and conducted prayers at the conclusion of each worship. The night worship on each day was preceded by the conducting of *homam* at the Viswanath Mandir and the recitation of the *Durga-saptasati*, in the original, by the *ritviks*. During the night *satsanga*, the English and the Hindi translations of the scripture were read, in instalments.

On September 30, the Vijayadashami was celebrated with Ayudha Puja, and holding of a special *satsanga* in the morning, when Swamiji gave a general initiation in the chanting of *mantras* to those present.

Mrs. Margot Ariss, of Beirut, Lebanon, was initiated into the order of *Sannyasa* by Sri Swami Sivanandaji on the same day. She is now known as Swami Sivanandalalitananda.

PRESS ANNIVERSARY

The ninth foundation anniversary of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy Press

was celebrated here on September 20. It is well known that, to a large extent, the dissemination of the teachings of Swamiji, which, in other words, also mean the propagation of the ancient spiritual culture of India and, particularly, the message of Yoga and Vedanta all over the world, has been possible through the instrumentality of this prominent department of the Ashram, and for which due credit is due to all the noble Ashramites and workers that run it with devotion, dedication and untiring zeal. While not underestimating the rest of the workers at the Forest Academy Press, mention may be made of Swami Dayananda (Manager), Sri Narasimhalu, Swami Jnanananda, Sri Chari, Sri Vasudev, Sri Sevak Ram, Sri Rishi Ram, and Sri Viraraghavalu, who, together with others, constitute the main-spring at the back of the prolific output of Sivananda literature.

VISITORS

Among those who visited the Ashram during the period under review were: Sri Justice Bishan Narain, Judge, Supreme Court of India; Sir C.V. Ramamurti, Adviser to the Planning Commission; Lt.-Col. Sundaram and Lt.-Col. Rao, New Delhi; Dr. Padma Mudholkar, Bombay; Sri N. Srinivasan, Member, Income-Tax Appellate Tribunal, Patna; Sri P.C. Divanji, Bombay; Sri K.V. Achutan Nair, Calicut; Sri Nava-nit, Bulsar; Sri K. Srinivasan, Alleppey; and Sri B. Lovgren, of Sweden, who took some coverage on Swamiji and his teachings for televising in his country; and Rani Prem Kumariji, Bombay.

Sri Chen Yoke Chun, of Malaya, and Miss Khurshid and Miss Jer Contractor, of Neemuch, were among the visiting *sadhaks* who stayed at the Ashram.

Sivananda Study Centre at Allahabad University

In a message sent to Dr. Chou Hsiang Kuang, convener of Sivananda Study Centre at Allahabad University, where he is the professor of Chinese Studies, the Vice-President, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, said that it was a pleasure for him to know about the dissemination of the spiritual message of this country through the Study Centre, for which Swami Sivananda stood.

In a pre-inaugural meeting, the following office-bearers were elected:

Patron: Dr. Shri Ranjan, Vice-Chancellor of Allahabad University; President: Dr. Chou Hsiang-Kuang; Vice-President and Treasurer: Prof. R.C. Sharma; Secretary: Sri Sudhir K. Jain; Joint Secretaries: Miss Minoti Roy, Sri Motilal Kaul, and Sri Ramkrishna Shukla; Members of the Executive Council: Messrs S.C. Mukerji, Gopal Krishna Gupta, Prem Narain Gupta, S.D.

Misra, Rajendra Jaiswal, S.B. Joshi, Ratan Lal, Ramdeo Shukla, Dinanath Bajpai, Miss Mandira Deb, and Miss Shamim Latik.

The Sivananda Study Centre is constituted with the object of inculcating among the youth of the University the basic spiritual ideals of life, conditioned to the needs of the modern times, and to enable its members to imbibe the inspiration from the teachings of Swami Sivananda to build up a sound basis of integrity, self-discipline, sense of values and a sterling character, on which to mould the future course of their life.

The Centre is also constituted with the object of rendering a humble token of service to Swami Sivananda in the form of fulfilling, in some measure, his desire to serve the youth of the country, and make them ideal citizens and responsible members of the society of the future. In the spirit

of the teachings of Swami Sivananda, the Centre's endeavours would be non-sectarian and universal in their perspective. The Centre is not a religious body but an all-inclusive spiritual organization.

The Divine Life Society thanks Dr. Chou Hsiang-Kuang for his initiative and efforts in forming the Study Centre, and

also Dr. Shri Ranjan, the Vice-Chancellor, for his co-operation and guidance. The Centre is scheduled to be formally inaugurated in the second week of November by Swami Krishnananda, General Secretary of the Divine Life Society, who has also been invited by the Vice-Chancellor to deliver a series of lectures at the Allahabad University as a guest speaker.

Thirteenth All-India Divine Life Conference

The 13th All-India Divine Life and All-Religions' Conference, organized by the Mysore Branch of the Divine Life Society under the chairmanship of Sri P. Gopalakrishna Setty, was held in that city from September 13 to 16. The Conference was attended by a large number of devotees, and was a unique event in stirring the spiritual consciousness of the people. A number of discourses on the various facets of divine life by religious leaders and scholars, reading of messages and papers received for the occasion, unveiling of a portrait of Swami Sivananda and playing of his tape-recorded messages, devotional music by distinguished artistes, and a procession through the main streets of Mysore on September 17, were the main features.

In his presidential address, Swami Shuddhananda Bharati said that man must widen the horizons of his soul and think beyond the framework of the limitations of matter. This could be done through Yoga, which was but a science of a better life in tune with the infinite spirit. Through the practice of Yoga, one could tap the fountain of purity, freedom, peace, power, knowledge and bliss, and find one's way to real life, which was done through the unfoldment of the inner spirit. Continuing his address, Swami Shuddhananda Bharati said that Swami Sivananda has reinterpre-

ted to modern humanity the message of our ancient seers, and has sent missionaries abroad, like Asoka, to propagate the spiritual wisdom of India. He has done his duty, and our duty was to know him closely, and apply his message for leading a better and brighter life.

The Divine Life Conference was inaugurated at the Town Hall of Mysore City, on September 13, by H.H. Sri Martanda Varma, the Elayarajah of Travancore. In his speech, welcoming the delegates, the chairman of the reception committee, Sri Gopalakrishna Setty, said that the main purpose of the Divine Life Society as well as of holding the All-India Divine Life Conference periodically in different places was to revive the spiritual awareness among the people, and keep on reminding them of the noble ideals of life. Our purpose was to remove tension and dissension among mankind, to promote understanding and unity, strive to change the angle of our vision, and realize the Divine, he stressed. The Headquarters of the Divine Life Society were represented by Swami Venkatesananda. The General Secretary of the Conference was Sri V. Lakshmana Rao Jagatap. It was proposed to hold the next All-India Divine Life Conference in Madras City in 1961. (Details of the Conference are being published in the Divine Life Society's *Gazette* for Branches.)

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Sivananda Publication League, P.O. Sivanandanagar, via Rishikesh, U.P.

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Sivananda Tooth-Powder	nP. 50 and Re. 1	Madhumeha Nivarak	Rs. 2.00 and 4.00
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Sivananda Ayurvedic Pharmaceutical Works,

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LATEST SIVANANDA PUBLICATIONS

SIVANANDA'S LETTERS (To Kumudini Devi) : A collection of 112 letters, full of spiritual inspiration and practical guidance. The second part of the book contains a tabloid version of Swamiji's teachings. (Re. 1-50).

A **BROCHURE**, containing the message and papers read at the 12th All-India Divine Life Conference, held in December 1959 by the Mercara Branch of the Divine Life Society, has just been released.

IDEAL SATSANG is a pamphlet, containing selected *kirtan dhwani's, stotras*, and some verses from the *Bhagavadgita*, with text and English translation. (50 nP)

A *Telugu* edition of *Ideal Satsang* is also available.

The pamphlets, *Karmas and Diseases* and *Idol Worship*, have been published in *Oriya* and *Telugu*, respectively. *Sivananda Karanamritam* is a pamphlet presenting the life of Swamiji in *Telugu* verses.

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RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP, AFFILIATION AND SUBSCRIPTION

We request all our subscribers to renew their subscription for the next year at their earliest, so as to avoid the rush of renewals at the last moment. We are very thankful to all subscribers for having allowed us to serve them through this journal. We are also thankful to the members and the Branches of the Divine Life Society for being associated with us in the fellowship of divine life, and to all those who have helped us in various ways, for which we are grateful.

From the next year onward our calendar year for subscription to *The Divine Life* would be either from January to December, or from July to June, i.e., the new subscribers, subscribing for one year (the minimum period for which subscription is acceptable) at any time in the first half of the year, will receive the journal from the January number of the same year till the December number, and those subscribing at any time in the second half of the year will receive the issues from the July number of the same year till the June number of the next year. Old subscribers are, however, requested to renew their subscription now itself for the next year or years. If you send two years' subscription (Rs. 7) you get a concession of one rupee, and for three years (Rs. 10) a concession of two rupees.

We also request all members of the Divine Life Society and its Branches to renew their membership and affiliation, respectively, for the next year or years, at their earliest. Anyone, devoted to a life of truth, love and purity, is eligible to become a member of the Divine Life Society, irrespective of any distinction, on payment of Rs. 2.50 (or \$ 1.00, or the equivalent in other currencies for those outside India) towards annual membership fee, which covers

the subscription to *Wisdom-Light*, a monthly periodical specially intended to serve the members, and an admission fee of Rs. 5.00 or \$ 2.00 or the equivalent), which meets initially the cost of a copy of Swami Sivananda's *Essence of Yoga*, a rosary and some spiritual diary and resolve forms. Members are also entitled to receive *The Divine Life*, at a concession, in addition to *Wisdom-Light*, if they pay Rs. 6.00 towards annual membership fee.

It is our humble request to old members to bring in at least one or two new entrants each, who would be associated with them as fellow-aspirants for spiritual evolution, as new members of the Society from the next year onward. Any group of members can form a Branch of the Society with the object of spreading the message of divine life, constituting study circles, or holding daily or weekly *satsanga*, or serving the people of their locality in any manner they consider best. We also humbly request all Branches of the Society to enrol at least ten subscribers to '*The Divine Life*' each, and help us in spreading the message of divine life, as taught by Swami Sivananda, which includes within its fold all the common principles of spiritual culture, and the simple and basic practices for the regeneration of the human nature through self-discipline and inculcation of moral values. All members associated with the Branches of the Society should also be members of the Headquarters. Membership to the Mother Institution should be common for all of them. The annual affiliation fee for the Branches (Rs. 12.00, or \$ 4.00 or the equivalent in other currencies for the Branches outside India) is meant for supplying them a copy each of *The Divine Life*, *Wisdom-Light*, and *The Branch Gazette*.

Secretary, Divine Life Society, P.O. Sivanandanagar, via Rishikesh, U.P.